

have yet to be answered by the administration.

However, the President's recent budget request does outline his game plan to advance this flawed policy. The current strategy seems to be spending more taxpayer dollars to continue to try to convince a skeptical public that the health care law is good policy; and if they don't agree, use an enforcement hammer to ensure compliance.

Buried within the President's budget is a request for a 315 percent increase for the public affairs office at the Department of Health and Human Services. One of the primary tasks of the Public Affairs Office is to sell the health care reform law to the American people. Furthermore, they also requested a whopping 1,270 new Internal Revenue Service agents to implement the law and to enforce its individual mandate and other related provisions.

While Speaker PELOSI may have advocated passing the bill so that we could learn what is in it, many Americans were not so naive. They understand that you can't spend the same dollar twice. They understand that if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. They know when someone shows up from the government offering a carrot, there is probably a stick not far behind.

Last year, a real opportunity to craft health care policy on a bipartisan basis was squandered. That missed opportunity will continue to haunt us.

Unfortunately, I worry that the second year under the oppressive provisions of this law will be no better than the last. It is regrettable that we have reached this point, having known so many of these problems existed before this law passed. But of course we were warned.

So, I will use the occasion of the solemn first anniversary to redouble my efforts to right the wrong.

We will work to wipe this misguided law from the books to protect the rights of Americans to choose their doctor, select their insurance, and trust in their own good judgment. Many are committed to the cause. I believe it will happen.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

SBIR/STTR REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2011

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 493, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 493) to reauthorize and improve the SBIR and STTR programs, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Nelson (NE) amendment No. 182, of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 183, to prohibit the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from promulgating any regulation concerning, taking action relating to, or taking into consideration the emission of a greenhouse gas to address climate change.

Vitter amendment No. 178, to require the Federal Government to sell off unused Federal real property.

Inhofe (for Johanns) amendment No. 161, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the expansion of information reporting requirements to payments made to corporations, payments for property and other gross proceeds, and rental property expense payments.

Snowe amendment No. 193, to strike the Federal authorization of the National Veterans Business Development Corporation.

AMENDMENT NO. 182

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to amendment No. 182, offered by the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. NELSON.

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I rise to speak on my amendment proposing a sense-of-the-Senate agreement to cut the Senate's budget by at least 5 percent.

When I go home every weekend, people come up to me at the grocery store, hardware store and elsewhere, and they tell me they are concerned about our national debt and deficit. They want Washington to cut spending and bring down the cloud of debt that hangs over our economic environment.

As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Legislative Branch Subcommittee, I have been pursuing a 5-percent cut in this year's budget for Congress and agencies and offices on Capitol Hill. We cut this budget a year ago, we are cutting it this year, and we will be back for further cuts next year.

My amendment says that as Congress pursues comprehensive debt reduction while conducting major military action on two fronts, all in the midst of a fragile economic recovery, Congress still should not be exempt from the pain. Fiscal restraint starts at home and with our own budget.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I rise to agree with my colleague from Nebraska, to support his amendment, and to congratulate him for his newfound enthusiasm for this idea.

Actually, on January 10, the House of Representatives passed a rule to reduce its spending by 5 percent. This measure was passed on a rollcall vote of 410 to 13. Soon thereafter, I was the first Senator to call on my colleagues in the Senate to cut their office expenditures by 5 percent. This small but symbolic step could save the taxpayers over \$20 million.

On February 4, some 6 weeks ago, I requested unanimous consent to take up a sense-of-the-Senate resolution I authored, urging all Senators to take such action. Unfortunately, at that

time and since then, there has been an objection from the other side of the aisle to this unanimous consent request.

My effort was bipartisan. I was joined by 14 of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, and I thank them.

We now have an agreement to take up my sense-of-the-Senate resolution by unanimous consent later in the day so as to expedite and refine enactment of the provisions of the Nelson amendment. Based on that understanding—

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. WICKER. I commend the Senator from Nebraska for coming to this idea somewhat late. But I support his amendment nonetheless.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Is there any time remaining?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is no time remaining.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 41 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Akaka	Feinstein	Merkley
Alexander	Franken	Mikulski
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Murkowski
Baucus	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Bennet	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Hatch	Paul
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Portman
Blunt	Hutchison	Pryor
Boozman	Inhofe	Reed
Boxer	Inouye	Reid
Brown (MA)	Isakson	Risch
Brown (OH)	Johanns	Roberts
Burr	Johnson (SD)	Rubio
Cantwell	Johnson (WI)	Sanders
Cardin	Kerry	Schumer
Carper	Kirk	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Shelby
Chambliss	Kohl	Snowe
Coats	Kyl	Stabenow
Coburn	Landrieu	Tester
Cochran	Lautenberg	Thune
Collins	Leahy	Toomey
Conrad	Lee	Udall (CO)
Coons	Levin	Udall (NM)
Corker	Lieberman	Vitter
Cornyn	Lugar	Warner
Crapo	Manchin	Webb
DeMint	McCain	Whitehouse
Durbin	McCaskill	Wicker
Ensign	McConnell	Wyden
Enzi	Menendez	

NAYS—1

Sessions

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The amendment (No. 182) was agreed to.